

WASTE 2 RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**** MEETING SUMMARY ****

September 18, 2012, 9:30 a.m.

In Dean Large's (Committee Chair) and John Sherman's (Vice Chair) absence, Laurie Davies called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. Laurie announced that for now, John Sherman will serve as Committee Chair. Introductions were made. Laurie asked for a motion to approve the July 17 meeting notes. There was a motion to adopt them. The motion was seconded and the notes were approved.

Discussion on Waste Reduction, Recycling, and Litter Control Account (WRRLCA)

Purpose and Ground Rules – Jane Dewell, Jeanne Fulcher

Jane reminded the group that the ultimate purpose is to agree on priorities for spending the 30 percent portion of WRRLCA funds.

Jeanne reviewed the ground rules developed at the last meeting:

- Turn off phones and BlackBerries.
- Express ideas openly and honestly.
- Work together.
- No side conversations.
- Engage and listen.
- Raise hands.
- Respect differences.

No new ground rules were added to the list.

Jane reviewed the "parking lot" items from the last meeting, which were requests for the following:

- Document showing what's required by statute, how Ecology implements those requirements and the dollar amounts.
- Handout showing where MTCA funding is going now.

This information was provided to the committee in additional information sent on August 10, 2012, and discussed during the webinar on September 13, 2012 (1:30 – 3:00 p.m.).

Review Shared Values – Jane Dewell

Jane reviewed shared values identified by the group. Some themes have emerged:

- Environment – protect, sustain.
- Programs – effective, fair.
- Money – prudently spent, reliable funds.

Jane asked those who weren't at the last meeting if they wanted to add to the values. They had nothing new to add.

Summarize September 13 Webinar - Laurie Davies, Janine Bogar

Laurie said the reason we held the webinar was to take time to answer any specific questions about the funding so we would have more time at this W2RAC meeting to discuss issues.

Laurie referred to a document emailed to the committee and also provided as a handout that summarizes the questions asked at the webinar and the answers.

Suellen Mele commented that the webinar was a great overview. Sego Jackson asked if the webinar Q&A document is publicly available. Susanne will have it posted to the W2RAC website.

Directions for Discussion: WRRLCA 30 Percent Funded Activities – Jane Dewell, Jeanne Fulcher

Jane explained the purpose of this discussion, which is to give everyone a chance to voice opinions on what activities they support or don't support to be funded by the WRRLCA 30 percent.

We will spend time at November's committee meeting to prioritize activities. Laurie Davies added that this process is similar to what her program management team uses in program planning to develop the Waste 2 Resources Program budget.

Sego Jackson said the "screen" he was using when he was preparing to provide input was asking if the activities are an appropriate use of the funds. He wasn't clear on "favoring" or "not favoring" activities. Jane suggested that perhaps not everyone agrees with the activities, thus the budget provisos.

Pat Campbell asked since some members are not represented at this meeting, how we would (or would we) accept feedback after the meeting. Laurie Davies said if anyone has comments or opinions to share after the meeting, they can send them to her and we'll incorporate them into the notes.

Matt Henry commented the activities list is huge and they all are important, so it is hard to not favor any of them. We probably need to prioritize the activities.

Kimberly Shanley asked if there's a "magic number" we're trying to get to when determining priorities. Laurie Davies said we hope to be fully funded next biennium, and sees using a similar prioritization process as her management team uses for budget development.

Jerry Smedes asked about the level of effort for these different activities, and noted the priority level may not correlate with the effort.

Jody Snyder asked if it matters at this point for the purpose of this meeting that there are activities where there is no funding. Laurie Davies said no. Provide input on the activities regardless of the funding status.

Suellen Mele asked if the committee can ask clarifying questions about the activities. Laurie Davies said yes.

Discussion: WRRLCA Funded Activities – Share Opinions – Jane Dewell, Jeanne Fulcher

Technical assistance to locals and businesses

Laurie Davies described this activity as a core function that covers a lot of ground, including Ecology staff assistance on permits, MRW, planning, and grants.

Art Starry – Favors. Local governments need the technical assistance from Ecology. It's a high priority. It's important for the state to have resources to implement a consistent state program.

Matt Henry – Favors. It's important for consistency across the state.

Information Clearinghouse

Laurie explained this was designed to share information among local governments, including but not limited to CPG. The clearinghouse is also used for locals to report electronically on grants. It has not worked as well as we would like. We need more counties to enter information.

Jerry Smedes asked if we could meet the desired function if there was more funding emphasis. Laurie answered that we need more staff, and there has been a lot of turnover.

Kimberly Shanley asked if the clearinghouse relies on locals to enter information, and Laurie answered yes.

Dennis Durbin – Favors as an important resource, but there are challenges downloading documents if they are in different computer programs than you have available.

Jody Snyder – Favors with concerns. She is concerned about the amount of funding it takes to make the clearinghouse effective. Is it worthwhile at half operation?

Sego Jackson– Favors. The clearinghouse is the only thing that protects CPG grants for local governments. The results of the work done with the grants are shown there.

Pat Campbell – Favors in concept. It would be good to have metrics to gage how often it is used.
Art Starry – Favors. The clearinghouse is the only place the information can be collected to show what’s being done statewide.

Commingled recycling study

Laurie explained this work was done by the Southwest Region workgroup Shannon McClelland led to look at issues with commingled recycling. The work may extend into the Northwest Region.

Suellen Mele – Favors. The work done so far has provided a lot of great information, but has only included the Southwest Region. The study could be worthwhile to continue in other parts of the state. It has also been a very collaborative effort, bringing a lot of different stakeholders to the table.

Mapping recycling facilities

Laurie explained the first part of this activity is to map curbside recycling availability. The next stage is to create an interactive map that includes all recycling facilities. This work is about a year out. Locals will be able to use this map for planning purposes.

Suellen Mele – Favors. Having a map showing what recycling facilities are available for the entire state is a picture that shows one size doesn’t fit all (east/west sides of the state). It’s a valuable planning tool.

Art Starry – He doesn’t know what he would recommend based on budget. He sees the value, but is this an activity we should pursue if we lack funding? It may not be a priority.

Dennis Durbin – Favors. It will be a valuable tool for local governments when it is done.

Matt Henry asked if we will discuss priorities at the November meeting. Laurie said yes. Pat Campbell asked if the committee will get an idea of level of effort for specific programs before that meeting, and Laurie said they would.

Packaging

Laurie explained that this work involves staff time tracking and responding to others about a variety of issues going on with packaging, including plastic bags.

Bill Reed – Favors. This activity is important to assist local governments.

Sego Jackson – Favors. Packaging is the number one thing the public wants to talk about.

Suellen Mele – Favors. She echoed Sego Jackson’s comment. There is also a lot of activity around packaging right now. She wants to see Ecology participating in arenas in the state and nationally where there are a lot of activities and conversation going on.

Jerry Smedes commented that he doesn’t consider this activity a core function.

Jan Gee – Doesn’t currently favor in the way work is performed. If the program were remodeled with proactive results with a broader picture, she would consider favoring it. She hasn’t seen a productive response to problem packaging. Banning plastic bags has been the only approach when there are alternatives such as recycling.

Dennis Durbin - Industry seems to be handling bags, but don’t locals need to help get the word out?

Product-specific programs

Laurie said this work includes product stewardship. Staff has to respond to proposed legislation.

Jan Gee – Doesn’t favor, unless it’s for products that are taxed for WRRLCA.

Vicki Christophersen – Favors if focused on toxic materials only. There should be something beyond just basic legislative review of the proposals, e.g. a cost and benefit analysis. The work should be for something sustainable. Toxics money would be best to pay for this work.

Matt Henry – Favored and echoed Vicki Christophersen, and added there should be an environmental benefit. Ecology needs to take a functional role and consider existing infrastructure.

Jody Snyder – Favors, but it needs lifecycle analysis.

Sego Jackson – Favors. It’s important to deal with the whole realm of products and the waste hierarchy. This spans more than just toxics. Product specific programs can be broader than just product stewardship. Ecology should look at a range of solutions.

Suellen Mele – Favors.

Suellen asked to add an item to the “parking lot” list. Will there be time at the next meeting to look at the WRRLCA 30 percent and what it should fund? She disagrees that it should only be used for taxed items. Or maybe we don’t have to discuss but just accept there are different opinions.

Transporting recyclables

Jerry Smedes – Favors.

Vicki Christophersen – Favors. There are lots of lost recyclables in this activity. It would be good for Washington State Patrol, Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission, Department of Revenue, and Ecology to collaborate in this effort.

Sego Jackson – Favors.

1-800-RECYCLE Hotline

Laurie Davies said keeping this activity going is a struggle. It's very labor intensive. Although the hotline is in high demand, it is easier to cut than other activities when locals can do it and we're lacking funding.

Dennis Durbin – Doesn't favor. As a local government, he can better explain his program than another entity.

Sego Jackson – Favors, but this activity needs further discussion. We should look at "rebooting." Local solid waste companies are trying to figure out who to send customers to.

Vicki Christophersen – Favors and echoed Sego Jackson's comments. She would be willing to put together small group to look at revamping the activity and how it should be funded.

Rob Guttridge - Doesn't favor. Clark County doesn't use it. Local governments can do this work better.

Jan Gee – Strongly favors retaining some type of citizen access activity like this. This has been a priority of WRRLCA for a long time.

Suellen Mele – Favors. She refers people to the hotline all of the time. She wants Ecology to retain the function.

Lorie Hewitt commented that the hotline is not just a call-in function. The public accesses the hotline database through the web and it gets lots of hits.

A "parking lot" issue was added to the list: Discuss a potential committee to look at a 1-800-recycle hotline "reboot."

School recycling awards

Jan Gee – Favors. She would like a deeper look at it and possible restructuring. She would like to hear from Ecology on how productive the program is. Laurie Davies says it gets a lot of "bang for the buck." It provides seed money for great recycling programs and education in the schools.

Sego Jackson – Favors, with reboot or further discussion. Can we bring in solid waste companies through revenue sharing agreements? Solid waste companies think education is important.

Matt Henry – Favors. Most private haulers have programs, but this program supplements them.

Note: At this point in the meeting, with time running short to discuss each individual activity, the committee was asked to provide input by the broader categories and on any activity they had specific comments on.

Organics Management:

- *Composting Education and Training*
- *Technical Assistance to locals and businesses*
- *Anaerobic digestion*
- *Backyard composting*
- *Natural yard care*
- *Beneficial use determination*
- *Food waste prevention*
- *Facility compliance*
- *Organic waste to resources/fuels research*

Laurie briefly described all of the above activities.

Jan Gee asked about which of these programs was federally required and if it came with funding. Laurie said it is Beneficial Use Determination, and no federal funding is available.

Matt Henry asked if the WRRLCA 30 percent was used to fund the waste to resources research. Laurie answered that a bill from the legislature included money for this in the WRRLCA 30 percent, and it has become part of the operating account (or carry-forward funding).

Jerry Smedes – Favors most or all of these activities. He sees core functions as composting/education, technical assistance and facility compliance. When the committee gets to the next exercise (prioritization), there should be a relative ranking of expenditures with activities.

Vicki Christophersen – Agreed with Jerry Smedes' comments. She added one more core function: capacity/infrastructure needs. This needs a statewide look. We also need to address community response to siting and permitting new compost facilities.

Kimberly Shanley added that we also need to look at building sustainable markets for compost.

Laurie Davies commented that this was cut from the budget years ago, but Vicki Christophersen says maybe they can help get more money for this.

Suellen Mele – Favors. She would add food waste prevention to the core list. She also asked who would be most appropriate to implement natural yard care and backyard composting. Is this best at the local government level?

Laurie Davies said another challenge is banning disposal of organic waste, which can increase capacity problems at compost facilities.

Jan Gee – She agrees with the four core items (composting/education, technical assistance, facility compliance, and capacity issues) and that they are O.K. for WRRICA funding. She doesn't think that backyard composting and natural yard care are core functions. She would like to see more technical assistance provided to food businesses for composting.

Construction & Demolition (green building):

- *Building material use and recycling*
- *Sustainable building materials*
- *Education and technical assistance*

Laurie briefly described all of the above activities, which now focus mostly on C&D recycling.

Vicki Christophersen – Favors. Sham recycling of C&D is a huge problem. Look at LEED certifications. She sees problems with recycling what they are supposed to.

Sego Jackson – Strongly favors. He thinks Ecology should look at the different tools that are out there to help support this work (LEED, Green Halo). There are great opportunities that have been squandered by cheaters.

Jan Gee commented that there is no litter tax on the building industry. She does not think we should use WRRICA funds for this.

Moderate Risk Waste:

- *Reduction, recycling, safe handling*
- *Environmentally preferred purchasing (EPP)*

Laurie summarized that we do not use WRRICA for MRW work except for EPP.

Art Starry – Favors, appropriate to use MTCA funding for this work.

- *State Solid Waste Planning*
- *Local Solid and Hazardous Waste Planning and Implementation Assistance*
- *Data Collection and Reporting*
- *Solid Waste Laws Update*
- *Financing the Solid Waste System*
- *Rule development*

Laurie briefly described all of the above activities.

Jerry Smedes – Favors the four programs required by statute (state and local planning, data and rules). They are appropriate under WRRLCA or MTCA.

Vicki Christophersen wonders if updating the state solid waste plan every five years is too often. Should we ask the Legislature to change that? She doesn't favor the solid waste laws update for now. She does favor the financing the solid waste system and data collection activities.

Suellen Mele commented that solid waste planning is critical. Regular course corrections are important as identified in today's discussion. We should keep doing the five-year updates, but look at a process to reduce the time spent. Solid waste financing is critical. She would like to have more conversation about the solid waste laws update. Perhaps it could be a more scaled-down process around a smaller portion of the law.

Rob Guttridge – Favors all six activities. They seem like core functions. The two that are not required by statute (laws update, finance) are needed to do our job well.

Sego Jackson – Favors all six activities as per Rob. He asked about the time period on the laws update. It might not be a priority for the next two years.

Bill Reed – Echoed Rob's support for all six activities. All are core functions.

Pat Campbell – She would like to see a laws update sometime in the near future.

Dennis Durbin added an item to the "parking lot" list: Talk about increased time between updates to state and local solid waste plans.

Suellen Mele – Regarding solid waste planning, it's one of the few opportunities for citizens to participate. The process allows for citizen input. She would hate to lose this option.

Define Next Steps – Jane Dewell

The goal for the November 20 W2RAC meeting is to come to an agreement or a disagreement on priority programs for 30 percent WRRLCA funds.

Laurie Davies recommended that we have another webinar in late October. We'll have information on the level of funding for programs, and any information on historic funding if the funding source is dramatically different now. It was decided to use a simplified scale to indicate basic funding level, with 1 to 5 dollar symbols.

Pat Campbell and Art Starry said they also want information on adequacy of the funding levels.

Vicki Christophersen wonders if there's a way to streamline solid waste planning. We should get input from local governments on what it costs.

Jane Dewell said it sounds like some subcommittees would be useful ("parking lot" item).

"Parking Lot" Items Summary:

- Broader discussion on WRRLCA 30 percent funding categories/activities.
- Talk about increased time between updates to state and local solid waste plans.
- Subcommittees to work on various issues, e.g. look at 1-800-recycle hotline, school awards, streamlining solid waste planning, and green building.

Next Steps for the WRRLCA 30 Percent Process

- Discuss priorities at the November W2RAC meeting. The committee will get an idea of level of effort for specific programs before that meeting.
- Look at the WRRLCA 30 percent and what it should fund at the November W2RAC meeting.

Agenda Items for Future Meetings

- Scrap Metal Buyers & Need for NPDES Permits, TBD
- Presentation on Public Participation Grants - Jason Alberich, TBD
- EPA's New Sustainable Materials Management Program – Issues We Can Work on Together – Lisa McArthur, TBD

Meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Submitted by: Susanne McLemore